United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General writes to Heads of State of Afghanistan and Tajikistan expressing concern about increasing hostilities in border area; urges all parties to exercise maximum restraint.

+ Special Envoy Traxler to undertake needs assessment mission to Sudan; will examine humanitarian access question and review relief activities.

+ Secretary-General says United Nations will make every effort regarding military, political and humanitarian situations in Lebanon; asks WFP and FAO to send aid to south of country; inter-agency mission expected to lead to humanitarian appeal.

+ President of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Croat leaders fail to meet for third day in a row at peace talks in Geneva; Co-Chairmen of Yugoslavia Conference await indication of Bosnian President's intentions.

+ Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities appeals to international community to reject partition plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Secretary-General, in report to Security Council, says he plans to send advance observer team to Liberia, as envisaged in Cotonou Peace Agreement; United Nations will play crucial role in Agreement's implementation.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has written to the Heads of State of Afghanistan and Tajikistan expressing his concern about increasing tension and hostilities on the border between the two countries and in the Pamir region, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General also urged all parties to exercise maximum restraint and to do nothing that could lead to further hostilities.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The Secretary-General discussed the situation yesterday with Yuliy Vorontsov, the Russian Federation's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, the spokesman noted.

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Vieri Traxler, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for humanitarian affairs in the Sudan, will leave this evening for that country to conduct a needs assessment mission and to examine the question of access for humanitarian relief, according to a United Nations spokesman. Mr. Traxler will also take an overall look at organizations and United Nations agencies and programmes working on relief activities in the Sudan.

The Secretary-General met this morning with the Permanent Representatives of Belgium, Denmark and Greece, and with the European Community delegation, to discuss the situation in the Sudan.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said the United Nations will make every possible effort on the military, political and humanitarian fronts with respect to the situation in Lebanon. The Secretary-General gave that assurance yesterday during a meeting with Lebanon's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. The Secretary-General also apprised the Ambassador of talks underway between the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the Lebanese Army regarding the deployment of Lebanese troops in the south of the country, according to a United Nations spokesman.

In order to facilitate the return of displaced persons to their homes, the Secretary-General has asked the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) to send immediate assistance to southern Lebanon, the spokesman said. A United Nations inter-agency mission would leave for the country later this week to assess the needs of the affected population, which included some 350,000 displaced persons. The mission was expected to result in an appeal for contributions.

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For the third day in a row, no meeting has taken place in Geneva between President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban, according to a United Nations spokesman. However, he said President Izetbegovic had met last night with President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia, President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and President Moomir Bulatovic of Montenegro to discuss "crucial map issues".

The Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen, were waiting for an indication from President Izetbegovic as to whether he intended to resume talks with the other Bosnian parties, according to the spokesman.

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The Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities has appealed to the international community to reject any partition plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina "which results from aggression, intervention and massive violation of human rights". In a resolution adopted in Geneva this afternoon, the Subcommission expressed deep concern that the existing draft agreement constituted a partition on ethnic and religious grounds.

The Subcommission referred to the affirmations by the Security Council that any taking of territory by force or any practice of "ethnic cleansing" was unlawful. It called for the invalidation of any agreement obtained under extreme duress from the Bosnian Government for purposes other than an end to hostilities paving the way for a peaceful settlement based on the principles of the United Nations Charter.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said he will begin planning for the dispatch of an advance team of United Nations observers to Liberia as soon as possible, as envisaged in the Liberian Peace Agreement signed in Cotonou on 25 July. In a report on Liberia dated 2 August, the Secretary-General said the United Nations had a crucial role to play in the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

Under the Agreement, hostilities were to end in Liberia on 1 August, and a Joint Cease-Fire Monitoring Committee was to be established to ensure against violations. The advance United Nations team would help the Committee pending the arrival of additional troops for ECOMOG -- the Military Observer Group of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) -- and a larger body of United Nations observers.

The Secretary-General said that the rapid expansion of humanitarian assistance activities throughout Liberia would be essential to the successful implementation of the Peace Agreement, and appealed to the international community to help in that endeavour.

In a related development, a United Nations spokesman today said that the Government of Côte d'Ivoire had been asked to halt unmonitored shipments across the border into Liberia. Shipments could resume once inspection procedures had been established to ensure that they did not include war materials. Meanwhile, the United Nations was looking for ways to ensure that halting shipments from Côte d'Ivoire would not result in an increase in starvation or suffering in Liberia.

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